CLAIMS

1   1.   A computer implemented method of preparing a computer system for use, said

2   computer system including a screen display with a screen display area, said method

3   comprising the steps of:

4   accepting a particular application button press by a user, wherein said computer

5   system includes a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications,

6   wherein said plurality of application buttons include said particular

7   application button, wherein each application button of said plurality of

8   application buttons:

9   is associated with a particular application program, and

10   is located at a location external to said screen display area; and

11   in response to said particular application button press:

12   waking a processor, and

13   executing the particular application program associated with said particular

14   application button.

1   2.   The method of claim 1, wherein

2   said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and

3   each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and

4   fixedly attached to said housing.

1   3.   The method of claim 2, wherein each application button of said plurality of

2   application buttons is a mechanical button.

1   4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the steps further include:

2   receiving data that indicates a user selected state for the particular application

3   program; and

4   in response to said particular application button press, bringing the particular

5   application program associated with the particular application button into said

6   state.

1   5.   The method of claim 1, wherein said step of waking a processor in response to said

2   particular application button press includes interrupting said processor such that said

3   processor enters an interrupt service routine.

1   6.   The method of claim 5, wherein said interrupt service routine tests a register to

2   determine which application button from said plurality of application buttons has been

3   pressed.

1   7.   The method of claim 1, wherein the steps further comprise executing a program that

2   reconfigures a new particular application program to be associated with a particular

3   application button of said plurality of application buttons.

1   8.   The method of claim 1,

2   wherein the computer system is a mobile computer system; and

3   wherein the steps include:

4   determining whether said particular application button was pressed for a

5   period of time that exceeds a predetermined period of time, and

6   if said particular application button was depressed for a period of time that

7   exceeds the predetermined period of time, then said particular

8   application program transmitting a data record.

1   9.   A computer apparatus, said computer apparatus comprising:

2   a screen display with a screen display area;

3   a processor, said processor having a low power consumption sleep mode, said

4   processor having a hardware interrupt line that awakes said processor from

5   said sleep mode;

6   a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications, wherein each application

7   button of said plurality of application buttons:

8   is associated with a particular application program,

9   is located at a location external to said screen display area, and

10   asserts said hardware interrupt line when said each application button is

11   pressed; and

12   interrupt service code for handling processor interrupts caused by said hardware

13   interrupt line being asserted by pressing a particular application button of said

14   plurality of application buttons, said interrupt service code causing execution

15   of the particular application program associated with said particular

16   application button.

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1   10.   The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein

2   said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and

3   each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and

4   fixedly attached to said housing.

1   11.   The computer apparatus of claim 10, wherein each application button of said plurality

2   of application buttons is a mechanical button.

1   12.   The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein

2   said computer apparatus is configured for receiving data that indicates a user selected

3   state for said particular application program associated with said particular

4   application button; and

5   said interrupt service code causing said execution of the particular application

6   program causes bringing said particular application program associated with

7   said particular application button into said state.

1   13.   The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein said interrupt service code tests a register

2   to determine which application button from said plurality of application buttons has been

3   pressed.

1   14.   The computer apparatus of claim 9, wherein said computer apparatus is configured

2   for executing a program that associates another application program with said particular

3   application button of said plurality of application buttons.

1   15.   The computer apparatus of claim 9,

2   wherein the computer apparatus is a mobile computer system;

3   wherein the computer apparatus is configured for determining whether said particular

4   application button was pressed for a period of time that exceeds a

5   predetermined period of time; and

6   if said particular application button was pressed for a period of time that exceeds the

7   predetermined period of time, then said interrupt service code causing said

8   execution of the particular application program causes said particular

9   application program to transmit a data record.

1 16.   A software product carrying code for preparing a computer system for use,

2   wherein execution of the code by one or more processors causes the one or more

3   processors to perform the steps of:

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5   accepting a particular application button press by a user, wherein said computer

6   system includes a plurality of application buttons for selecting applications,

7   wherein said plurality of application buttons include said particular

8   application button, wherein each application button of said plurality of

9   application buttons:

10   is associated with a particular application program, and

11   is located at a location external to said screen display area; and

12   in response to said particular application button press:

13   waking a processor, and

14   executing the particular application program associated with said particular

15   application button.

1 17.   The software product of claim 18, wherein

2   said processor and said screen display are incorporated within a housing; and

3   each application button of said plurality of application buttons is integrated and

4   fixedly attached to said housing.

1 18.   The software product of claim 17, wherein each application button of said plurality of

2   application buttons is a mechanical button.

1 19.   The software product of claim 16, wherein the steps further include:

2   receiving data that indicates a user selected state for the particular application

3   program; and

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